

**American Baptist Churches of the Great Rivers Region
REGIONAL MINISTRY BOARD**

Minutes From Meeting Friday, October 5, 2007

Holiday Hall South, Decatur Conference Center and Hotel, Decatur, Illinois

George Rosales, President

Roland Sundberg, Recorder

Present:	Francis Bartley Jim Daugherty Deborah Harkness Reg Mills Gerald Phillips Geraldine Sirls Dwight Stinnett	Elaine Bolen Diane DeSmidt Keith Ingold Helen Murrell George Rosales William Steger (19 of 27 members)	Henrietta Brown Jeffrey Hammer Mark Keyser PJ Patterson Mary Sharp Elmer Voudrie
Guests:	John Grisham Richard Ricks Roland Sundberg	Cheryl Henson Randy McNeely	Max Klinkenborg Muriel Johnson
Regrets:	Lynette Austin Courtney Jones William Schneck	Sharon Brown Patricia Midkiff Hari Smith	Rene' Gorbald Harry Parker

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George Rosales called the business meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. He then led us in prayer. The Minutes from the April 27, 2007 meeting were reviewed without objection and will be entered into the record.

DECISION ITEMS

Audits of the 2006 Financial Statements. Richard Grafton of Estes, Bridgewater & Ogden, performed the audit this year of the region's 2006 financial records. He met with the Ministry of Financial Stewardship on April 27, 2007, to present his preliminary draft of the 2006 Audit to the committee. The committee requested a few changes to

the audit and unanimously recommended forwarding the final draft of the 2006 Audit with revisions to the Regional Ministry Board for their approval. Richard Grafton's letter of audit was made available to the Regional Ministry Board, which approved the 2006 Audit unanimously. A copy of the finished Audit is on file in the region office.

Withdrawing Churches. In a notice dated April 30, 2007, **First Baptist Church of Princeton, IL**, took action to withdraw from the Great Rivers Region and American Baptist Churches. It was verified that the necessary procedures have been followed. After discussion, the board voted unanimously to authorize the Executive Minister to report a change of status to ABC/USA.

In a notice dated May 3, 2007, **Grandview Baptist Church of Quincy, IL**, took action to withdraw from the Great Rivers Region and American Baptist Churches. It was verified that the necessary procedures have been followed. After discussion, the board voted unanimously to authorize the Executive Minister to report a change of status to ABC/USA.

In a notice dated May 14, 2007, **First Baptist Church of Mt. Sterling, IL**, took action to withdraw from the Great Rivers Region and American Baptist Churches. It was verified that the necessary procedures have been followed. After discussion, the board voted unanimously to authorize the Executive Minister to report a change of status to ABC/USA.

2008 Budgets. The proposed budgets for the region and both camps for 2008 were mailed to board members in advance. These proposed budgets were prepared by the Ministry of Financial Stewardship with input from the Ministry of Staff Relations. With United Mission giving on the decrease and cash flow problems experienced at the camps and the region, it was explained that 2008 may prove to be another year of transition. Lake Benton Camp has closed, and Lake Springfield Camp is expecting another year with a very tight budget after borrowing from the region to cover cash flow and pay for a major renovation to the pool. The region will need to draw an additional \$50,000 from investment principal to balance the 2008 budget of \$1,121,592. Given the current financial crisis, the Ministry of Staff Relations recommended no salary increases across the board for 2008. After discussion, the board voted to accept the budgets for the Region, for Lake Springfield Camp and Blackhawk Camp.

GRR Investment Policy Guidelines. The Ministry of Financial Stewardship recently reviewed the Investment Policy Guidelines of the region, which had not been updated since 1994, and recommended changes to the Board. Because of the reorganization several years ago, several editing changes in our guidelines were suggested to make the document conform to regional Bylaws and Standing Rules. There are no changes proposed in our investment practices. After brief discussion, the board voted unanimously to adopt the changes to the Investment Policy Guidelines.

Renewal of GRR Council Charters. The Ministry of Planning and Review recently reviewed the expiring charters of Councils organized by previous Board action.

Councils are created by charters and function no longer than five years. After discussion, the Board voted unanimously to renew charters for both the Council on Ministerial Standing and Ordination (COMSAO) and the Camp Advisory Council for another five years.

Meeting Dates for 2008. The board voted to adopt the following 2008 meeting dates:
Friday, January 18 at 10:00 a.m. (Region office in Springfield)
Friday, May 2 at 1:00 p.m. (Region office in Springfield)
Friday, October 3, prior to Annual Meeting in Moline

MONITORING ITEMS

Staff Report. Dwight offered to briefly discuss key issues and answer questions, particularly on issues related to the Regional Ministry Board. A written update of all staff activity since the last annual meeting was provided to board members.

GRR Roadmap. The Program Staff of the region worked with the various Ministry teams to prepare a financial strategy to move the Region through our current financial crisis. The primary goal of this Roadmap is to adapt to a new financial reality while positioning GRR for a stronger future. Dwight shared our present financial situation with the board and gave illustrations of financial data for monitoring purposes. Total American Baptist Mission Support (ABMS) is flat, but there are dramatic changes among the giving categories. We are in the midst of a radical change in giving attitudes and options. United Mission is an increasingly unreliable and diminishing source of regional income. However, the effort to generate new income streams for the region has been successful. But one-fourth of all GRR churches still do not support either the region or other mission partners in any way.

INCIDENTAL ITEMS

Denominational Issues. Many questions were asked about the reorganization of the national denomination and how this will affect the region. The president of American Baptist Churches USA wrote and acknowledged receipt of our board's open letter. Copies of Dr. Griffin's letter were made available to the board members. Deadlines were missed in the restructuring process of the denomination, thus making it impossible to present a reorganization proposal at the 2007 Biennial, but models are in the works to propose adoption at the 2009 Biennial.

The board adjourned with prayer at 7:30 p.m., agreeing to hold its next regular meeting on Friday, January 18, 2008, at 10:00 a.m. at the Regional Resource Center in Springfield.